Orissa govt for phased CRPF withdrawal from Kandhamal

Contributed by Correspondent Thursday, 01 January 2009 Last Updated Monday, 25 January 2010

Asking the Centre to withdraw the para-military forces from Kandhamal district in a phased manner, Orissa on Thursday said its newly recruited police personnel would replace the CRPF jawans in the riot-hit district.

"Our officials will be in touch with the Union Home ministry for a phased withdrawal of the CRPF personnel and their replacement by the newly recruited policemen of our state," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik told reporters after a high-level meeting here.

Stating that the process of recruiting about 3,000 police personnel would be completed by March, he said the new recruits would be deployed in Kandhamal.

Though the state government had earlier asked the Union Home ministry to allow Central forces to stay on till the end of January to facilitate smooth return of people to their villages from relief camps, the Centre extended the duration only by another fortnight.

The original period of Central forces deployment was to end on December 31, 2008.

"They (Centre) have extended the force deployment period till middle of January," Patnaik said.

"I will again speak to Union Home Minister P Chidambaram," he said.

(Source: http://www.zeenews.com/states/2009-01-01/495400news.html)

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